

Selectmen's Meeting Minutes
August 12, 2019

At the Selectmen's Meeting held on Monday, August 12, 2019 at 4:45 p.m. the following people were in attendance: Stanley Holz, John Tholl, and Peter Corey.

A motion was made by Stanley Holz to enter into non-public session at 4:45 p.m. pursuant to NH RSA 91-A:3, II(l) consideration of legal advice provided by legal counsel either in writing or orally, to one or more members of the public body, even where legal counsel is not present. The motion was seconded by Peter Corey. All in favor, 3-0. Motion passed.

The Board adjourned from non-public session at 5:00 p.m.

A motion was made by Stanley Holz to enter into non-public session at 5:00 p.m. pursuant to NH RSA 91-A:3, II(b) the hiring of any person as a public employee. The motion was seconded by Peter Corey. All in favor, 3-0. Motion passed.

The Board adjourned from non-public session at 5:30 p.m.

John Tholl led the pledge of allegiance.

Old Business

Demolition of Hazardous Buildings

Mr. Larsen said that he has enough money in the budget to do the demolition of 33 Elm Street, which will start on Wednesday. 86 Union Street is already down. Mr. Larsen said he thinks he found the money, but needs permission from the Board, to move forward with the North Street properties. The Board said we have \$5,000 coming from DG Whitefield in the form of a donation for building demolition. Mr. Larsen said he has the money in the public works budget. He said that we saved some money on the new loader and excavator, rental or leased equipment—he has \$12,000 to \$14,000 left in that line item. He is taking them out of various line items. Peter said he went through the items and looked at line items and we are better than half way through the year and he is not just talking about public works and he believes that we will have money to put towards these projects. Mr. Larsen said that it will save us a significant amount of money to do the buildings now while the equipment is already here. It is a safety issue to get these buildings torn down. We may be able to get some of our money back. The property owners are billed for the demolition—legally liens will be put on these properties and go after any other property they may own as well.

Edie Worcester asked if this is going to be a burden on the taxpayers, and Peter said this extra money is going to come from the existing budget so it will not increase the budget.

Frank Lombardi, Chairman of the Conservation Commission, presented a proposal for a Whitefield Ecological Walk. Frank said about a month ago the Town had come to the planning board to merge some lots by the sewer treatment plant. Their idea is to have a trail on these parcels of land owned by the Town. It is all on town-owned property. It is about .8 mile, round trip.

Benefits of the project:

- Provides an opportunity for recreation to explore a variety of environmental ecosystems with close proximity to the downtown area
- Historical significance.
- Less than a mile round trip
- Free and safe parking at town office.
- Community pride
- Educational opportunity for all ages
- Easily accessible for the after school program and recreation program at the Town office
- Utilizes existing town property.

Who are the stakeholders?

- Conservation Commission
- Town of Whitefield
- Sewer/Water Department
- Adjacent property owners
- Police Dept.

What are the costs?

- Projecting \$500 a year

The primary trail system is already existing. It will be constructed and maintained by the Conservation Commission. They have money in the budget for this.

John Tholl said you need to get permission from the State to utilize the trails.

Peter said he likes the idea. We should have our insurance provider take a look as well. If the Conservation Commission is going to correspond with the Bureau of Rail, they should run it by the Board of Selectmen. Find a place where you can cross the tracks directly in a straight line. This would be the best option.

Barbara Pinkham, Cemetery Trustee, attended the meeting. Barbara spoke with Mr. Larsen about the trees along cemetery property that are in need of being taken down. Barbara spoke with Eversource about some of the trees on Pine Street. There is one tree we do not know whose property it is on. In 2001 the selectmen were offered land from Ed and Ann Comeau on Spruce Lane they had that land they did not want anymore—it was sloped and wooded and they offered it to the Town. Barbara researched it with the Town, and the Town signed papers with them in 2001 and did a boundary line adjustment to add it to the “cemetery”. Ten years ago the Rickers purchased the property next to that down on Spruce Lane, and there is a tree that is either on their property or the town property that needs to be taken down. Barbara said that she is concerned about that tree, you can hear it cracking. It is going to destroy some property if it comes down. Barbara has been talking with Rob, and they don’t have cemetery budget money to do this tree removal. Barbara said at our cemetery meeting on Tuesday, we wondered if the Board would proceed with having that portion surveyed. Rob also offered the possibility that the Town could take it town, but we don’t know whose property it really is on. We should get it surveyed—Mark Vanderheyden did the original survey. Could we hire him to mark that line appropriately? Rob said he can call Mark and get him to lay out that line. If that tree is on cemetery property, Rob will take care of taking that tree down.

Barbara said they were informed by two men they were interested in continuing to do the burials that have been done for many years by Bernie Bean, who recently passed away. One is his son Aaron and the other is Paul Cormier. Barbara said that the trustees have no say in that. The cemetery burials are paid directly by the funeral homes. The trustees discussed it at their last meeting. They trustees are fine with either one, as long as they have the equipment and insurance. It really comes down to who the funeral home is contracting with to do the service.

Luis Adorno from NHDES Drinking Water & Groundwater Bureau, Project Manager for the Asset Management System and Cathy Conway of Horizons Engineering attended the meeting.

Luis said that he has been with DES for five years. He was a water operator prior to that. He managed the distribution system. He manages the asset management grant program and other programs at DES. The asset management program is about 6 years ago. It is a program to dangle a carrot in front of communities to change the culture in water systems. We operate on the reactive rather than proactive. They have allocated money for these programs. The Town applied for the grant program are starting to work on the project. The program helps the Town make sure they know what they own, know the risk they are acquiring, and know how to move forward to really manage the assets. We have been kicking the can down the road for too long. We need infrastructure to support the utilities. It starts with the water. Now the real work starts, the Town is going to have to be able to provide the information to the consultant to create the maps and start talking about the priority list and level of service. What kind of service do we want to provide? We take it for granted, but .006 cents is what we pay for water per gallon. What other service can you say you are only paying .006 cents per gallon for? That is not really enough to operate a business. Water rates are going to have to go higher. If you continue to operate a business this way, it is not going to work. They are asking the Board to support this program for sustainable water systems and a sustainability community.

Cathy Conway of Horizons Engineering wanted to take a few minutes to talk about the specifics of what they have been contracted to. We have about \$18,000 in grant funds. We had \$14,000 of in-kind costs, which will utilize the Town's time to help gather the information, and work together. That is a step we need to figure out. There is a \$5,000 match as well included in the water budget. The first step is gathering the data. How are we going to have two individuals look at the distribution, buildings, three storage tanks, etc? We need to think about that. How are we going to utilize the time in the best way as efficiently as possible? We will develop base maps and GIS maps so we are starting to get more information to maintain it more efficiently. The next step is to do the asset management plan. CUPPS is a software program that is user friendly and we put the assets into that system. It is a prioritized list of the improvements based on the criticality of them. Cathy said we need to determine the level of service. Everything has an associated cost. What is our level of service? Do we want to respond to a break within 2 hours or 24 hours, it does makes a difference. If you have a lot of water loss, how do we want to reduce that? What we are thinking about in terms of quality of service? Every community is different. We will do a public informational meeting and hear input with their thoughts and concerns. They are ready to get going and will work with Rob and the Water Department.

Frank Lombardi asked about the existing GIS program the town has. Luis said CUPPS is not going to be our GIS platform. CUPPS is the budgeting process, capital improvements, number crunching software. GIS will happen somewhere else. This is a free EPA software, which doesn't have the ability to do mapping. That type of information is going to aid in the collection of the data. We will take the data

and spit out the numbers. Cathy said we will work with the communities. Everyone has a different level of information. We would like gate valves and curb stops located—is that already there? Does it have the depth of the well, and the pieces? We use what we can, but we may need to add to it for a more robust program. How can we enhance what we have got? It is a data decision tool that the Board feels comfortable with the decisions are made. The budget, we will gather data on previous expenditures and water rates so in future years we can run different scenarios, can we replace water line and look at different options. How much can your ratepayers afford?

Peter asked about estimated time line. The project needs to be completed by May 31, 2020. Rob said he would like to have authorization to hire an intern. It is a lot of work to gather all this data. We have until May to get this done. Rob would like to hire an intern who could do this for us. Peter asked Rob to present us with a plan of how this will be paid for and the how it will all work. Peter said a couple of thoughts he has, knowing our issue with water loss, it is difficult to actually determine because we have many miles of privately installed private water line, and we don't have a meter on the main where those private water lines connect. That is a big issue. He liked the ideas of looking at redundancy. Look at the abandonment of Cherry Mountain well. If we can get rid of some of these wells may save us money. That is some of the ideas that will come out of this study. What is the best source of action for the community? We have so much infrastructure that has not been taken care of to the level it should be, proactively. Could we take a look at adding more customers without growing the wells? What is a good return on that expansion dollar? We are always running into lines we did not know where they go. Having new meters will help us find some of our water loss. This whole water thing will take having more than one person on staff. We need to determine what is necessary to provide a level of service that is affordable.

Rob said in reference to the paving of the town hall parking lot. He has got one solid quote. He is waiting on another quote. He will get back to the Board once he receives that last quote. He was not able to get a third price quote.

Rob had a proposal for engineering services from Horizons Engineering for a feasibility study for transfer station relocation in the amount of \$7,600. Rob said that UNH has a program where they would look at this for us, but Horizons has to do an engineering study on the feasibility of the plan. We need to determine if it is financially feasible. The goal is to go to 0 waste. The \$7,600 is going to come out of his existing budget because he has some flexibility in a few of these places. Peter is a little confused. He likes outside the box thinking, but Peter is concerned we are looking at spending \$7,600 on a site that we don't even have site control over. Rob needs to come before the Board with the numbers, show us on a piece of paper that the site is feasible.

The Board reviewed a water abatement request, which was denied. The ordinance is very clear in Section 4, Meters, that all water passing through the meters will be billed for.

Rob Jacobs, of the N.H. Pyrotechnics Association reached out to the Board about an event that they are working with the Airport Commission on to have two nights of fireworks at the airport. The dates will be September 6th and 7th. They have asked to be able to use the airport for two days in September where they will do some testing of fireworks for training and on Saturday night they are willing to put on a full municipal fireworks display at no cost to the Town. They were requesting assistance paying for portable toilets, but John said the Airport Commission has agreed to take care of this. The next item was picking up the trash on Sunday. The Board agreed that the town crew can pick up the trash on Monday. Mr.

Jacobs said they were reaching out to the Fire and Police Departments about details for those two nights.

A motion was made by Peter Corey to approve the Selectmen's Meeting minutes minutes of July 22 and July 29 2019. The motion was seconded by Stanley Holz. All in favor, 3-0. Motion passed.

The Board agreed to request a refund check from Primex for the Workers' Compensation Program Premium Holiday in the amount of \$2,668.67.

The Board approved the 2019 Assessment for DG Whitefield, LLC.

The Board will hold their next meeting on Wednesday, September 4, 2019 at 6:30 p.m. rather than Monday, August 26, 2019.

The meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.